

Washington, DC - Later today the U.S. House of Representatives is expected to pass the National Water Research and Development Initiative Act of 2009- a bill that will help coordinate national water research and development initiatives in an effort to ensure Americans have a clean and sustainable water supply for generations to come. The bill is a significant step towards ensuring that the U.S. has an effective water strategy that uses federal research and development funds- roughly \$700 million annually- efficiently and effectively.

Congresswoman Gwen Moore will offer amendments on the House floor today that are designed to make certain that this coordination includes the Milwaukee area's vibrant and growing water research community and water industries. Moore's efforts will allow public-private partnerships like the Milwaukee 7 Water Council or water researchers at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee's Great Lakes WATER Institute and Freshwater Sciences School the ability to follow the work of the interagency committee as well as provide input about its decisions. In addition, Moore's efforts will encourage the federal government to invest resources into developing and training future water scientists and engineers which could also bolster Milwaukee area universities and research institutes.

"Water and especially clean freshwater is the most precious resource on the planet and we need to take every step possible to make sure that our country is at the forefront of innovative technological advances when it comes to water," said Rep. Moore. "In this bill we seek to consolidate and better coordinate federal water research and development efforts as well as provide an avenue for those organizations on the ground to have a greater role moving forward. We are living in a new day and we must ensure that federal research efforts are aligned and working together with water academics and industry like we have in abundance in Milwaukee to develop new knowledge, tools, and technology meant to help our nation meet its water needs."

The bill, H.R. 1145, requires the president to establish an interagency committee with representation from all Federal agencies dealing with water to implement a National Water Research and Development Initiative. This initiative will create a plan and set federal funding priorities for federal water research including-development, demonstration, data collection and dissemination, education, and technology transfer. In tough economic times, it is imperative that we use every dollar we spend effectively.

"Water will be the dominant worldwide issue this century. In Milwaukee, we have over 120 companies and a series of schools and research facilities working tirelessly to develop new water technologies. The importance of the provisions and Congresswoman Moore's amendments in H.R. 1145 cannot be overstated in terms of their ability to help us address and solve the world's water challenges while also providing crucial economic development opportunities for our region," said Julia Taylor, President of the Greater Milwaukee Committee, a primary sponsor of the Milwaukee 7 Water Council.

Over twenty federal agencies carry out research and development on some aspect of water supply, water quality, or water management. Despite a substantial federal water research budget, an increase in the number of water shortages and emerging conflicts over water supplies make it imperative that the federal government be better prepared to address the

nation's water management issues.

Coordination of federal agency activities will ensure that agency programs are focused on areas of greatest concern, and that federal efforts are complementary and not duplicative.

"Annually nearly three quarters of a billion dollars is spent at the federal level on water research and development and the Milwaukee area offers some of the best and leading universities and research institutes in this field. If we can effectively engage the public, private and academic communities in this endeavor, the benefit to the Milwaukee area economy and environment could be felt for years to come," said Congresswoman Moore.

Upon passage the bill will sent to the Senate for consideration.

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